

I know that the late Representative John Lewis would have taken every opportunity to use his voice and speak up for those who would not have food on their table if not for food banks. I know that he would have taken every opportunity to speak up for those at risk of losing the roof over their head, and I know that he would have taken every opportunity to speak up for the small and minority-owned businesses which cannot survive without help.

Just last week, it was reported that the Atlanta businesses that have managed to remain open are only making it by the slimmest of margins. Many of these struggling small and minority-owned businesses have never, even before the pandemic, had the access to the capital they need.

They need a pivot. The loans from the Paycheck Protection Program would certainly help them, and additional funds for this program must be included in any stimulus plan moving forward.

□ 1030

As the pandemic continues to impact communities in my district and across the country, I cannot help but urge my new colleagues to step up and take meaningful action. We cannot, and must not, leave the American people to deal with this virus alone. It is in the spirit of the Honorable John Lewis, our North Star and guiding light, that I say we must not leave Congress until we ensure that help is on the way.

Mr. Speaker, struggling Americans deserve better.

CONGRATULATING MYRNA BALLARD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ms. Myrna Ballard on her retirement from serving as Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce president after 23 years.

Myrna has been a pillar to Valdosta and Lowndes throughout her time serving in the chamber because of her work in economic development, infrastructure building, and supporting pro-business legislation. Thanks to her diligent and consistent efforts, the chamber has continuously received the 5-star accreditation by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

The accreditation program defines standards of excellence in chamber planning and performance, and shows chambers how they can reach and maintain these standards. It also recognizes folks like Myrna who have helped set high standards for chamber members and staff to contribute to the good of their communities.

Mr. Speaker, I wish Myrna the best as she begins her retirement. Congratulations again.

HONORING MEG HEAP

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Chatham County District Attorney Meg Heap.

Since she was elected DA in 2012, Meg has fought hard to secure justice, prevent crimes, and improve our community. Her lifelong passion for working with victims of crime and senior citizens helped pave her way to law school at Mercer University. A Savannah native, Meg's career and time as DA was marked by her love for Chatham County and its people, which is why she worked so hard to establish the many new programs and innovations to improve the district attorney's office.

Some of the many programs she started include the Youth Intercept for at-risk youth and the Pretrial Diversion for youthful, non-violent first offenders. Meg also helped establish the Chatham County Family Justice Center to assist special victims find the services they need in just one space.

I am thankful for Meg's many years of hard work, as Chatham is truly a better place because of her.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DANIEL ZEIGLER

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember and honor Mr. Daniel Zeigler of Savannah, Georgia, who, sadly, passed away on December 4 at the young age of 33.

Daniel was a graduate of the South University School of Pharmacy and worked as a pharmacist at Medicap Pharmacy. One of his greatest joys was taking care of his pharmacy patients, and he did it with unmatched kindness and intentionality.

Daniel loved the Lord and attended services at Compassion Christian Church's Henderson Campus. Like his father, he also had a passion for cars and was an avid member of various organizations. Daniel was the youngest member of the Oglethorpe Driving Club, and cofounded the successful Cars and Coffee, which was a group for car lovers across Savannah.

He dedicated much of his joy and much of his time every December to helping out with the Toys for Tots toy drive, which benefits kids in need.

Mr. Speaker, my prayers, Amy's prayers, and all of the friends at Carter's Pharmacy's prayers go out to all the lives that Daniel touched, including his patients, his family, his parents, Donna and Jay, his brother, Jason, and all of his friends who were blessed to know him.

HONORING REPRESENTATIVE COLLIN C. PETERSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. PANETTA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PANETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor our colleague and my good friend, chairman of the Agricultural Committee, COLLIN PETERSON.

Mr. Speaker, Chairman PETERSON has served 30 years as a Member of Congress; so long that there was another Congressman PANETTA serving in this body when COLLIN was elected back in 1990. Fortunately, over that long time came experience and wisdom that Chairman PETERSON was more than

happy to use and share to help other Members of Congress, to serve his constituents in Minnesota's 7th Congressional District, and to further our Nation's agriculture. One thing that I have learned and one thing that Chairman PETERSON will always tell us is that more needs to be done for our agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, now, I first met Chairman PETERSON as a freshman Member on the Agriculture Committee. I will never forget how he gathered the freshmen Democrats, who were all excited not just to be a part of Congress, but having the opportunity to formulate the upcoming farm bill. But in his, let's just say, charming way, COLLIN quickly cooled that enthusiasm when he warned us about the potential for issues on the nutrition title—the largest section of that bill—in which he said it could prevent us from getting a bill.

In fact, in his straightforward way, he actually said, "If they screw with SNAP, we are not getting a farm bill."

I have to say, as the 115th went on, and with the positive hearings we had on SNAP, I was incredulous as to that warning that Chairman PETERSON had. But that ominous warning turned into an accurate prediction, because 2 weeks before the farm bill was dropped, we were notified of the majority's desire to add stringent restrictions on how one acquires SNAP benefits.

Mr. Speaker, but what I experienced after that was something I will never forget. The way Chairman PETERSON not only stood firm in his beliefs about the importance of the benefits to low-income families and that the fraud and error rate in those programs is among the lowest in government, and using the passion of Congressman DAVID SCOTT, Chairman PETERSON got us all to stand together in opposition.

He then worked together with chairman and ranking member of the Senate Agriculture Committee to push together, push forward, put together and pass a bipartisan 2018 farm bill.

Mr. Speaker, it is not surprising that Chairman PETERSON was able to do so, because during his time, he worked on five farm bills, a bill that has 12 titles and is complex and nuanced. So to lead the Agriculture Committee, to lead Congress, and to unify our members on something so diverse, it takes leadership, it takes knowledge of the farm policy, but also an understanding and appreciation of how the farm bill protects our food security and the people affected by our foreign policy.

It is also a bill that demonstrates what Chairman PETERSON stands for and what Chairman PETERSON made the Agriculture Committee stand for—a platform to support farmers, ranchers, and families in America. From the row crops and dairy producers in his rural district to the specialty crop and organic farmers and farm workers in my district, to the families in every district who rely on food assistance programs, Chairman PETERSON made

sure that all of us in Congress have a seat at the Agriculture Committee. I believe that is a big part of why the Agriculture Committee stands out for its bipartisanship and its commonsense approach in protecting food security and promoting people in agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, see, based on who he is and where he comes from, Chairman PETERSON understands the incredible contributions that rural Americans have on our way of life. We do have the best farmers and farm workers in the world. Rural Americans supply most of our food, our water, and our energy. They are the reason for our food security and our economic diversity. We don't have to pay that much for food. Therefore, we can spend on other things in our lives and create a diverse economy.

Mr. Speaker, rural Americans understand that every American's obligation is to give back to this country and community that has given us so much. Maybe that is why 30 percent of rural America makes up 30 percent of our Armed Forces. But what Chairman PETERSON warns is that, even with all that good work in rural America, they feel underappreciated and they feel overwhelmed.

Chairman PETERSON sees that firsthand with the widening divide between rural America and urban America, a divide that has led to the depletion of jobs, of small businesses, of people, and even communities, which ultimately leads to a growing sense of desperation.

Don't get me wrong, people in agriculture are used to dealing with the challenges. I call them the four Ms. They deal with Mother Nature. They deal with the markets. They deal with the mandates. They deal with the migration and the lack of labor. But they are always pivoting to get over those hurdles. It is that risk-taking attitude that allows them not just to survive, but to succeed.

Mr. Speaker, nowadays, there are other forces in play in rural America, with large corporate firms squeezing out the family-owned farms, with chain stores pricing out mom-and-pop stores, with the lack of rural broadband, and the lack of healthcare options and the shrinking number of rural hospitals.

It is no wonder why in many parts of rural America there is a sense of desperation leading to a ridiculously high rate of suicides and leaving a vacuum that can be filled with a vilification of certain races, certain places, and certain political parties.

Unfortunately, this has led not just to that type of vilification, but also to the lack of faith and how our Congress and government can help them.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to do what Chairman PETERSON has always said we should do. It is time for us to do more for those who aren't from rural districts to work on focusing and connecting with rural districts by showing up, by shutting up, by listening up, and for us to put up a strategy that is not just about doling out billions of dollars

to farmers, but actually partnering with them so they have sustainable business and a sustainable way of life.

Mr. Speaker, if we do that, we will uphold what Chairman PETERSON has always asked us to do, and that is to work for the people and agriculture, and we can do that and provide faith to people in rural America and all of America.

HONORING THE LIFE OF PASTOR DAVID BAKER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember and honor the life of my friend, Pastor David Baker of Belton, Missouri.

On November 29, Pastor Baker went to be with the Lord—a loss for us, but a gain for Heaven.

This last August marked his 39th year as senior pastor of the First Baptist Church of Belton, Missouri, and 37 years from his founding of Heartland Christian Schools. Through these two ministries, more than 6,000 people accepted Christ and over 2,000 people were baptized; truly remarkable.

Mr. Speaker, Pastor David Baker had a tremendous impact on countless lives and was a leader in the community. He was respected for his knowledge as a Bible scholar, his kind heart, his love for others, and his willingness to share what God's Word says about the issues of the day. He was not afraid to take a stand for what is right and good, which is refreshing in today's world.

Most of all, Pastor David Baker was a wonderful husband and ministry partner to his wife, Claire, and a loving father to his three children—Brian, Brett, and Brooke—and to his nine grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, Pastor Baker will be deeply missed, but I know his legacy will live on in the thousands of lives he touched and influenced for eternity. I am thankful for his friendship through the years and I am grateful for the positive impact he made on our community and this Nation.

HONORING THE LIFE OF RON DITZFELD

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Mr. Ron Ditzfeld, a beloved business leader, philanthropist, and a true pillar in the Sedalia community.

Ron Ditzfeld was born and raised in Sedalia, Missouri. His parents, Jon and Bernice, founded Ditzfeld Transfer, Incorporated, in 1960, with two straight trucks. In 1968, Ron Ditzfeld and his brother, Donnie, began working for the family business. In 1996, Ron took over as the President of Ditzfeld Transfer, Inc. Today, Ditzfeld Transfer, Inc., has more than 80 employees and provides trucking services, bus transportation, container services across the United States, trash pickup services, and provides warehouse and distribution services.

Ron also served two years in the U.S. Army at Fort Bragg in North Carolina.

Mr. Speaker, Ron was not only a beacon in the business community, he also was very active in the community serving on the board of several organizations, such as the State Fair Community College Foundation, CHS Cooperative Workshop, and Sedalia Airport.

His civic involvement includes the State Fair Foundation, the Economic Development Sedalia-Pettis County, Daum Museum of Contemporary Art at State Fair Community College, Sacred Heart Foundation, Child Safe of Central Missouri, Sedalia Bomber baseball, JROTC, and local/national disaster relief efforts.

Ron was dedicated to his community and he lent a hand whenever he could. Ron was even known to drive the Smith-Cotton High School JROTC and Team SCREAM robotics team to national competitions through Ditzfeld Transfer, Inc.'s charter services.

Ron will be dearly missed by his friends, family, and community. Please join me in honoring Ron Ditzfeld, whose legacy will continue to impact countless lives for many generations to come.

HONORING THE LIFE OF HOPE LECCI

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and remember the life of Hope Lecci, a dedicated reporter at the Sedalia Democrat, who passed away just days from writing the news articles about the passing of community leader, Ron Ditzfeld.

Hope began her career, not as a journalist, but as a teacher of English and history at Smithton School District, where she influenced countless students and future leaders, including our current State representative, Brad Pollitt.

Mr. Speaker, Hope was respected and revered by all who knew her. She was professional, kind, and loving to those around her, dedicated to her family and her faith. I enjoyed getting to know her and interacting with her as a journalist. She was always fair and dedicated to ensuring every quote was accurate and the topic was thoroughly covered. I am sorry she will no longer be covering news in the area, but I know she is rejoicing and receiving her heavenly reward.

Mr. Speaker, may her example inspire all of us to be our best in our professions and in our interactions with others.

HONORING MAYOR GEORGE CRETEKOS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CRIST) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CRIST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the life's work of a very honorable civil servant who has given so much to Pinellas County and the City of Clearwater over his long, accomplished, and selfless career.

George Cretekos has devoted his life to public service, over 5 decades of unwavering commitment to his fellow